百器徒然袋

薔薇十字探偵の鬱憤

瓶長

原作 京極夏彦
作画 志水アキ

角

HYAKKI-TSUREZURE-BUKURO

The Resentment of the Rose Cross & Detective The Case of the Jar Spirit

STORY BY
KYOUGOKU NATSUHIKO

ART BY
SHIMIZU AKI

TRANSLATION & TYPESETTING SANA
SHIKIGANAI SCANS

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Translator's Notes

Because Kyougoku Natsuhiko novels are all about cramming in as many obscure historical references as possible...

The Case of the Jar Spirit

All of the "Hyakki-Tsurezure-Bukuro" stories are loosely related to tsukumo-gami - a "kameosa," or jar spirit, is a type of tsukumo-gami. Tsukumo-gami are creatures from Japanese folklore that begin life as inanimate objects. After 100 years, the object can develop a spirit. If the object has been well cared for, the tsukumo-gami will protect the family that owns it... but if the object has been abused, the tsukumo-gami can be dangerous. The tsukumo-gami superstition encouraged people to care for their possessions and pass them on to their children and grandchildren.

The jar spirit usually looks like an old jar, but it can transform into a creature with hairy arms and legs. Although it looks fearsome, it's actually a beneficial spirit. The spirit will produce an unlimited supply of wine, water, rice, or anything else that's put into the jar.

Kotiques Roadshow

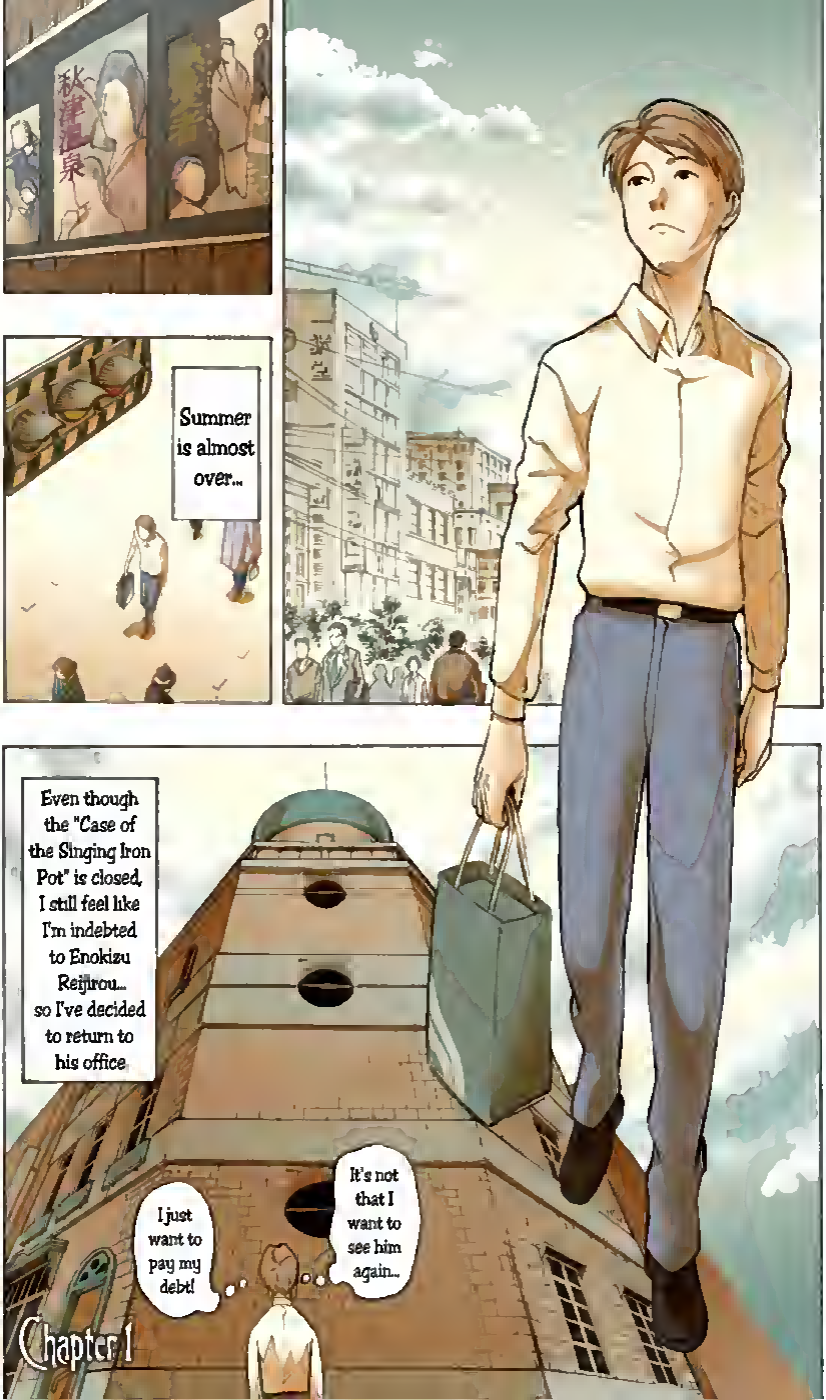
This case deals with an antique celadon vase, so it helps to know a bit of background information about celadon! Celadon is a type of porcelain that's covered in a greenish glaze (the color can range from pale green to grassy yellow to bright teal to deep green). Although you might be familiar with the blue and white Chinese porcelain produced from the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) onward, celadon is an earlier style that was highly prized by the Imperial Court. Because the production of celadon was controlled by the Imperial Court, it was known as the "secret color." Eventually, high quality celadon was produced in China, Japan, Korea and Thailand, so it wasn't really "secret," but for a long time the best celadon-making techniques were lost.

A delicate, light green shade of celadon that's highly prized in Japan is called "kinuta seiji," or "kinuta celadon." A "kinuta" is a wooden mallet traditionally used to iron clothes in Korea and Japan (you beat the wrinkles out). The first piece of high-quality Korean celadon to be imported to Japan was shaped like a kinuta, so the name stuck. In Korea, a kinuta (called a pangmangi) is a symbol of a happy home life, but in traditional Japanese poetry, it's often used as a symbol of a woman's isolation and loneliness.

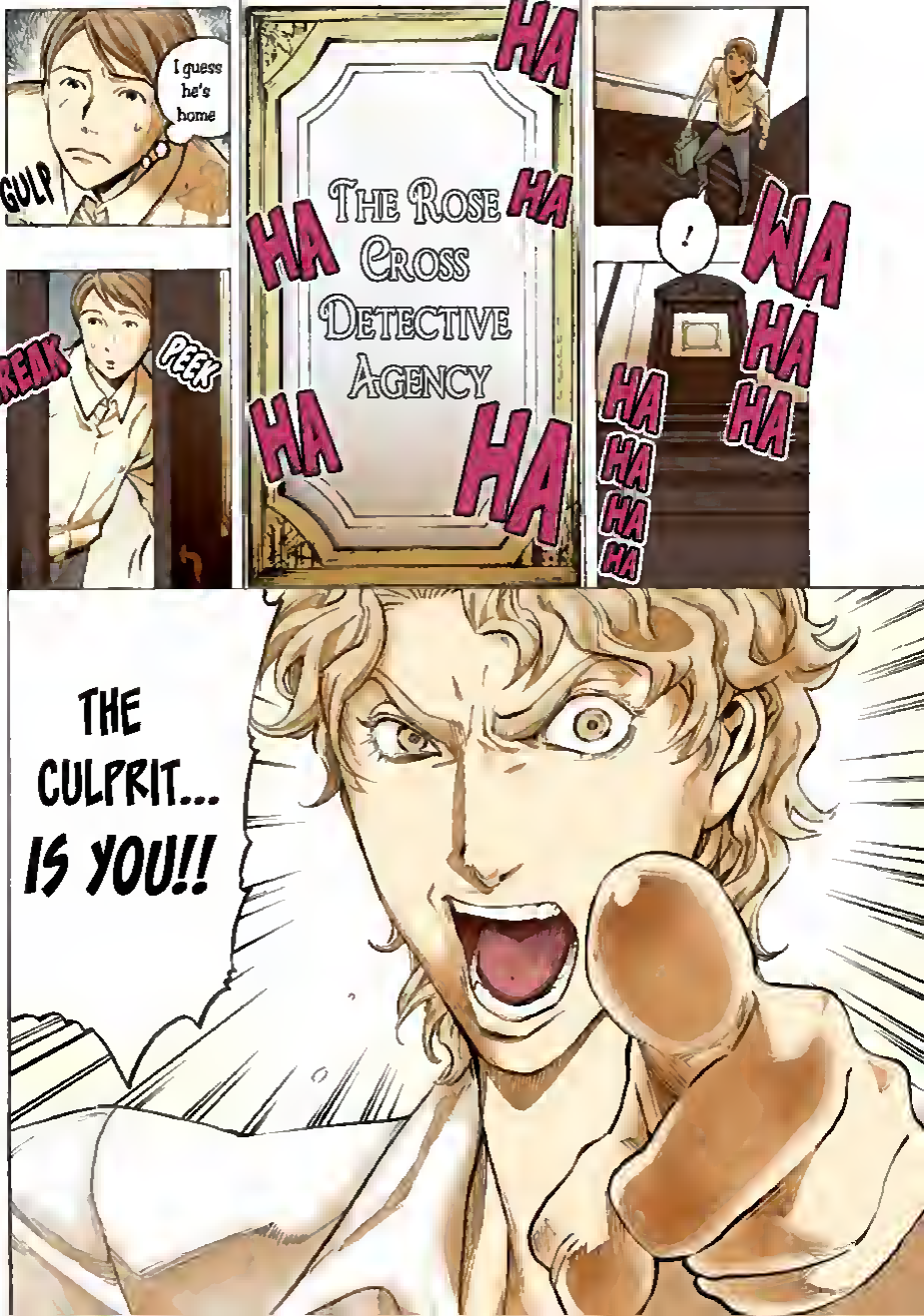
Today, high-quality antique celadon can sell for millions of dollars at auction, and some pieces are literally priceless.

Samurai Hipsters

So why are people willing to pay big bucks for old pottery? It's because of the tea ceremony. The Japanese art of the tea ceremony evolved as a way for rich people to show off their wealth and refinement in an elegant, understated way. "Wabi-sabi" art that was intentionally made to look rough and grungy was totally in style. Samurai were the original hipsters - they loved showing off their antique artisan pottery and their DIY flower arrangements. Back in the samurai era, people like Ishida Mitsunari and Sen no Rikyu rose to positions of power in government largely because they were good at making tea. Pottery-making became a huge industry, and different cities specialized in different styles of ceramics. Even today, the wives of wealthy businessmen will take tea ceremony and flower arranging classes to prove that they're classy rich people, not *trashy* rich people.

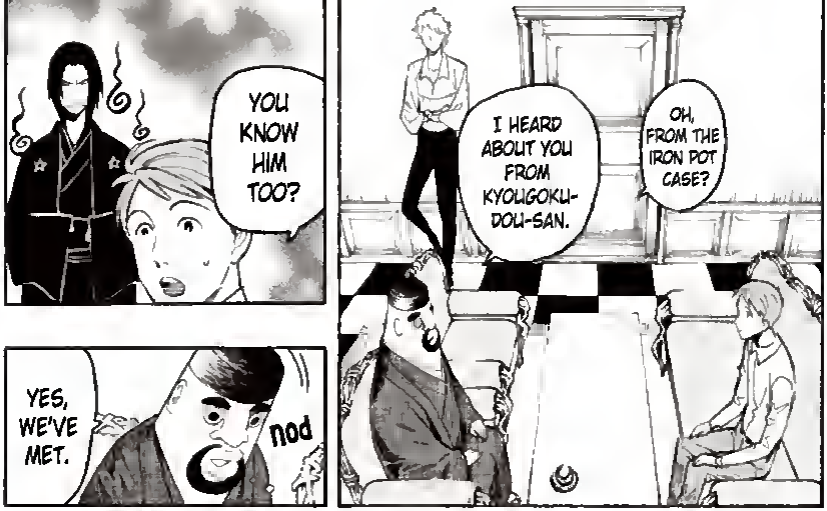

秋津温泉
Summer is almost over...
Even though the "Case of the Singing Iron Pot" is closed, I still feel like I'm indebted to Enokizu Reijirou... so I've decided to return to his office.
I just want to pay my debt!
It's not that I want to see him again...
Chapter 1

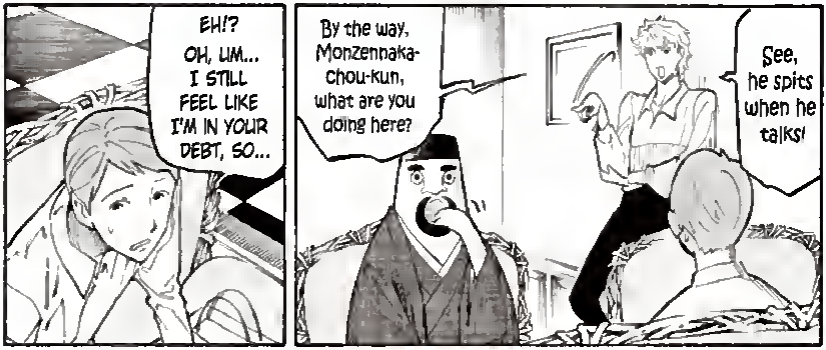
百器徒然袋 瓶長
薔薇十字探偵の憤慨
原作 京極夏彦
作画 志水アキ


I guess he's home
GULP
CREAK
PEEK
THE ROSE CROSS DETECTIVE AGENCY
HA HA HA HA HA
!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
THE CULPRIT...
IS YOU!!

That's Enokizu...
...ME?
LOL
I've always wanted to say that!!
OH HEY, WELCOME BACK!

UM...
And look at his mouth!
It's like a straight line!
And he spits when he talks!
It's hilarious!
.....
This is Machiko-san!!
Doesn't he look just like one of those weird clay figurines they excavated from the ancient burial grounds in Kitakyushu?
WA HA HA HA
SUPER DETECTIVE
And this is some guy I met somewhere!
He's happy to meet you too!
HA HA HA HA
BOW!
I'M IMAGAWA MASA-SUMI.
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU.
UM... HELLO, MY NAME IS...
What kind of intro-duction was that?


YOU KNOW HIM TOO?
I HEARD ABOUT YOU FROM KYOUGOKU-DOU-SAN.
OH, FROM THE IRON POT CASE?
YES, WE'VE MET.
nod


EH!?
OH, LIM... I STILL FEEL LIKE I'M IN YOUR DEBT, SO...
By the way, Monzennaka-chou-kun, what are you doing here?
See, he spits when he talks!

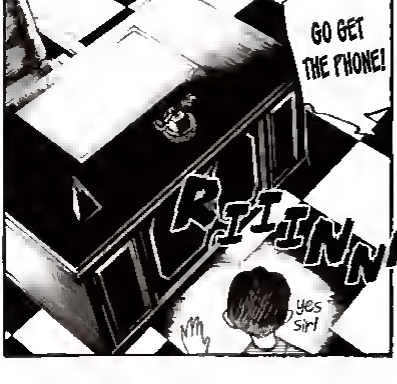
Huh? I don't get it.

Yeah, every time I have to go somewhere with that depressing monkey man, I feel sick to my stomach!
HUFF
FLOP
OH, ENOKIZU-SAN, I HEARD THAT YOU WERE ILL?

WHAT-EVER!
The more the merrier, right?

So he's like that with his friends, too...
Oh...

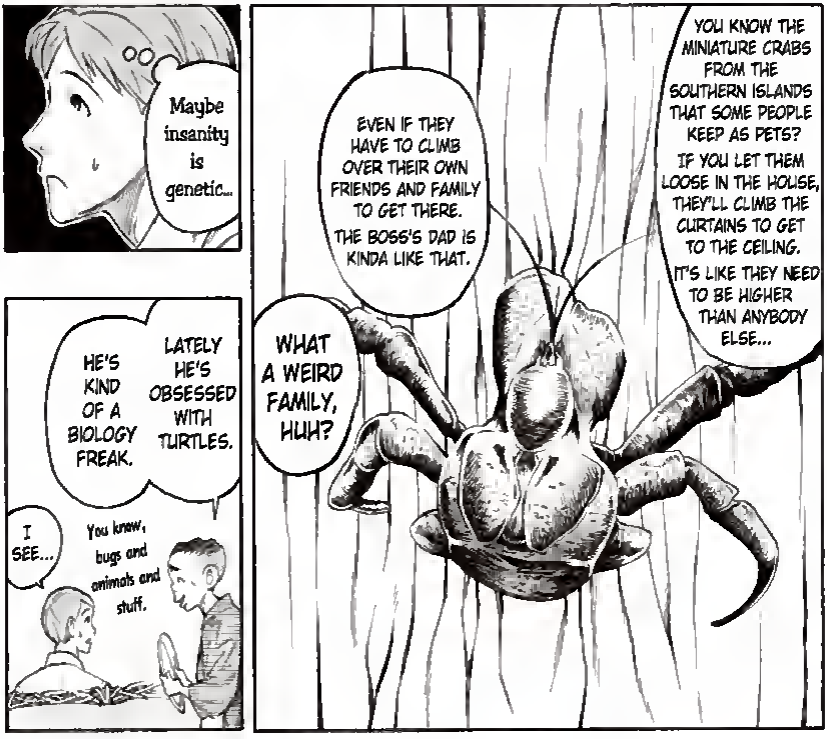
ENOKIZU-SAN LIKES TO TEASE HIM, BUT IN TRUTH THEY'RE VERY GOOD FRIENDS.
THE "MONKEY MAN" IS SEKIGUCHI TATSUMI-SAN, A NOVELIST.
ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN.

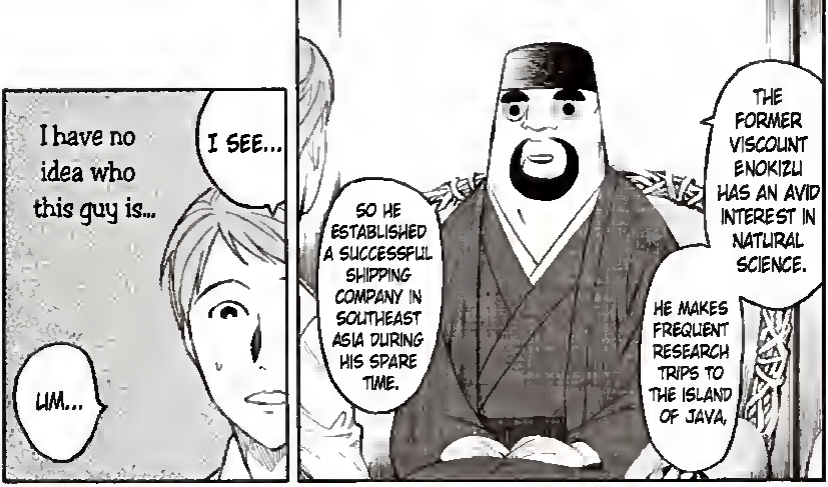

GO GET THE PHONE!
RIINNNG
Yes sir!

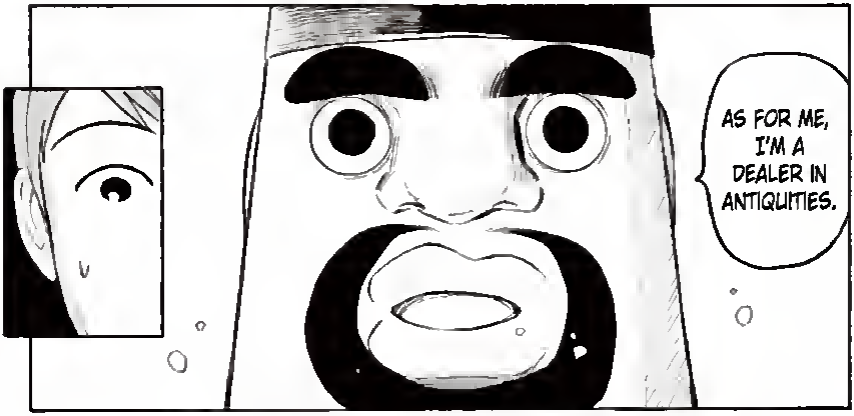
... FIGHT?

I didn't even get to fight anybody, so it was a boring case!!
HUFF

NOTE After WWII, Japan stopped using Western-style noble titles. So Eno's father is the "former" Viscount


Maybe insanity is genetic...
HE'S KIND OF A BIOLOGY FREAK.
LATELY HE'S OBSESSED WITH TURTLES.
I SEE...
You know, bugs and animals and stuff.
WHAT A WEIRD FAMILY, HUH?
EVEN IF THEY HAVE TO CLIMB OVER THEIR OWN FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO GET THERE.
THE BOSS'S DAD IS KINDA LIKE THAT.
YOU KNOW THE MINIATURE CRABS FROM THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS THAT SOME PEOPLE KEEP AS PETS?
IF YOU LET THEM LOOSE IN THE HOUSE, THEY'LL CLIMB THE CURTAINS TO GET TO THE CEILING.
IT'S LIKE THEY NEED TO BE HIGHER THAN ANYBODY ELSE...

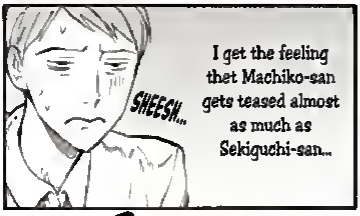

I have no idea who this guy is...
I SEE...
UM...
SO HE ESTABLISHED A SUCCESSFUL SHIPPING COMPANY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA DURING HIS SPARE TIME.
THE FORMER VISCOUNT ENOKIZU HAS AN AVID INTEREST IN NATURAL SCIENCE.
HE MAKES FREQUENT RESEARCH TRIPS TO THE ISLAND OF JAVA.


AS FOR ME, I'M A DEALER IN ANTIQUITIES.

So he's called "Machiko-san" after the name of his store...
Well, I never would have guessed that...
ENOKIZU-SAN WAS MY COMMANDING OFFICER DURING THE WAR.
I RUN AN ANTIQUES STORE CALLED "MACHIKOAN" IN AOYAMA.
WE SELL MOSTLY OLD FURNITURE.

I LOVE HEARING OLD WAR STORIES!
HA HA HA
LIKE THE TIME YOU WERE CHASED BY A DOG?
OR WHEN YOU NEARLY DROWNED IN THE BATH?
OR THE TIME WHEN YOU PASSED OUT DURING FLIGHT TRAINING?
??

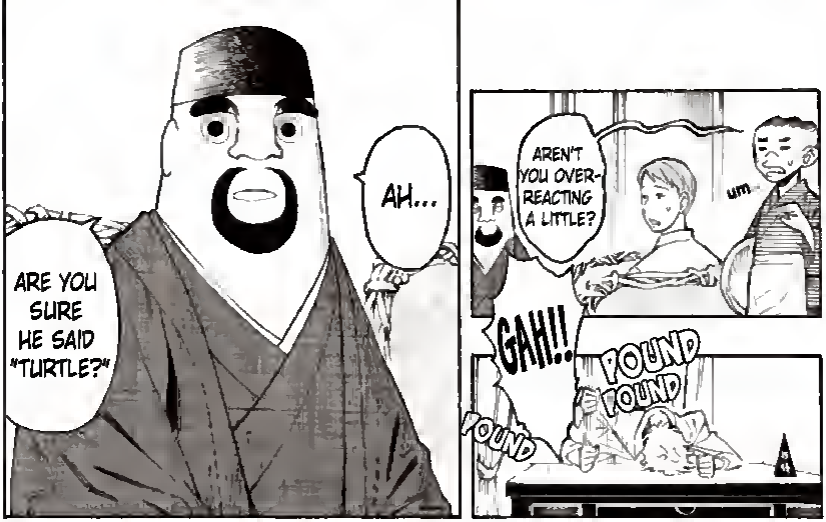
INCI-DENTS?
ENOKIZU-SAN HELPED ME WITH SEVERAL INCIDENTS DURING OUR MILITARY DAYS, SO THAT'S WHY I'M HERE TODAY.


SHEESH...
I get the feeling thet Machiko-san gets teased almost as much as Sekiguchi-san...

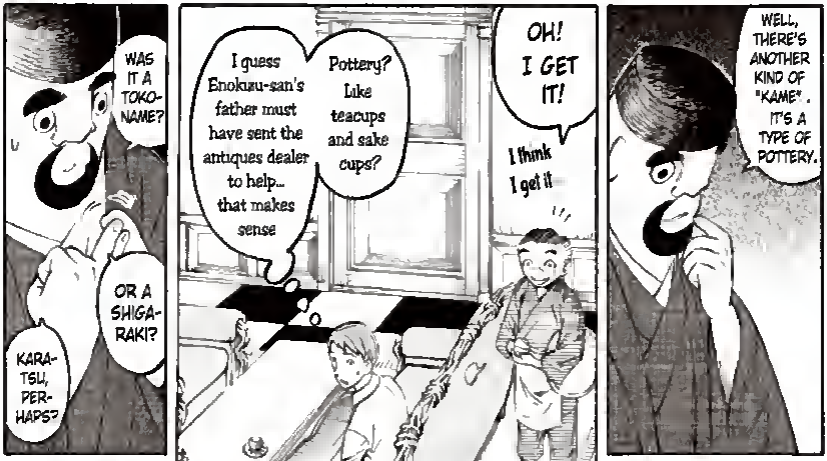
SLAM

...ARGH, MY FATHER IS SO ANNOYING!!
FLOP
SUPER DETECTI
GRR
GRR
STOMP
STOMP
KING CELERY? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
IF HE WANTS ME TO DO HIM A FAVOR, THEN HE SHOULD EXPLAIN IT CLEARLY!!
INSTEAD HE STARTS TALKING NONSENSE ABOUT "KING CELERY!"
IS HE SPEAKING ANY HUMAN LANGUAGE!?
IS HE EVEN SPEAKING JAPANESE!?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND A WORD HE SAYS!!
HIS FATHER'S PET TURTLE.
PRINCESS SEN?
She's pretty fast!
UH OH, DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO PRINCESS SEN?
DUD
HE WANTS ME TO FIND A TURTLE!
WHO KNOWS!?
BUT CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!?

STUPID TORA! I'M A DETECTIVE, NOT A TURTLE FINDER!!
eep!
QUIET, YOU FOOL!
BUT COME ON, BOSS, EVEN YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT NCESS SEN IS PRETTY CUTE...
YOUR DAD'S ALWAYS LOSING THINGS. YOU MIGHT AS WELL OPEN A LOST PET AGENCY INSTEAD OF A DETECTIVE AGENCY!
A TURTLE IS A TURTLE!
My dad bought Princess Sen from a pet store and gave her to your dad as a present.
BUT I THOUGHT KAMECHIYO WAS THE TURTLE HE FOUND ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.
WHY DOESN'T HE EVER ASK MY BROTHER TO DO ANYTHING!? IF HE'S SUCH AN ANIMAL LOVER, WHY DOESN'T HE GO LOOK ON HIS OWN!?
I hate my family!!
IT'S NOT EVEN MY TURTLE! MY STUPID BROTHER FOUND IT ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD DURING A SNOWSTORM! WHY DO I HAVE TO FIND IT!?
NO MATTER HOW YOU GOT IT, IT'S JUST A STUPID TURTLE!!
SLAM
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU BOUGHT IT OR FOUND IT OR WON IT AT A FESTIVAL GAME BOOTH!
SUPER DETECTIVE

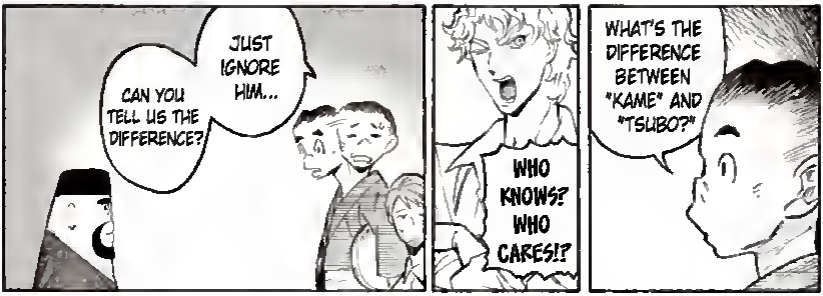


NOTE In Japanese, "turtle" is pronounced as "kame." But there's also a type of vase called a "kame."

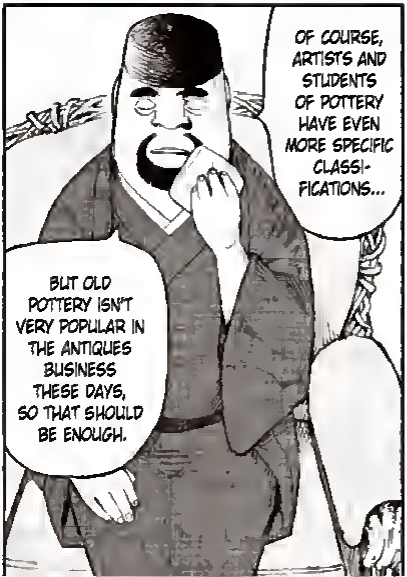

WAS IT A TOKO-NAME?
OR A SHIGA-RAKI?
KARA-TSU, PER-HAPS?
I guess Enokuzu-san's father must have sent the antiques dealer to help... that makes sense
Pottery? Like teacups and sake cups?
OH! I GET IT!
I think I get it
WELL, THERE'S ANOTHER KIND OF "KAME". IT'S A TYPE OF POTTERY.

NOTE He's naming famous styles of Japanese pottery.

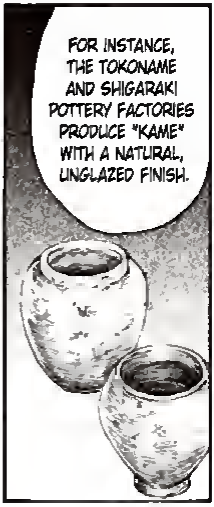
SPUTTER
UM...
SPUTTER
HM... WAS IT TANBA?
ECHIZEN? IGA? SUZU? SETO?
NO, NONE OF THOSE!!
SHAKE
SHAKE
NO! I'VE HEARD OF THOSE, AT LEAST. HE SAID SOME WEIRD NAME.
NO, NO! NONE OF THOSE!
SATSU-MA?
WAS IT BIZEN?
HAGI?
I THOUGHT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT TURTLES, SO IT MUST HAVE BEEN "KAME!"
SPUTTER
SPUTTER
WAS IT IMARI? OR MAYBE KAKIEMON OR GOKU-TANI...?
THOSE ARE ALL OF THE FAMOUS "KAME" POTTERY MANUFACTURERS I KNOW OF... PERHAPS IT WAS A "TSUBO" -STYLE PIECE OF POTTERY?
SIGH
I PROMISE, ENOKIZU-SAN, I'M TRYING MY BEST! EVEN I DON'T KNOW EVERY-THING!
SPUTTER
UM...
THERE'S A KYOTO-STYLE POTTERY FACTORY IN AGANO BY THE NAME OF TAKATORI. .
SPUTTER
NO, I TOLD YOU, IT WAS SOME-THING WEIRD! AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE AN EXPERT!?

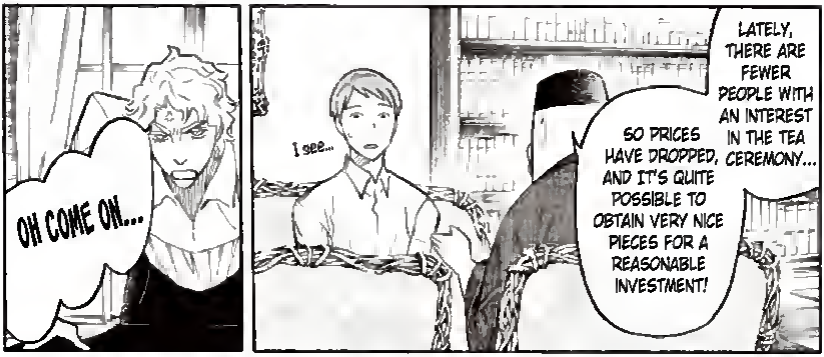

JUST IGNORE HIM...
CAN YOU TELL US THE DIFFERENCE?
WHO KNOWS? WHO CARES!?
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "KAME" AND "TSUBO?"

THERE ARE ALSO MANY SUB-TYPES AND STYLES WITHIN EACH CATEGORY.
IF THE OPENING IS VERY LARGE, LIKE A BOWL, WE CALL IT A "HACHI."
WHILE "KAME" HAVE A WIDER OPENING.
Well, in essence...
IT DEPENDS ON THE SHAPE. "TSUBO" HAVE A NARROW OPENING.

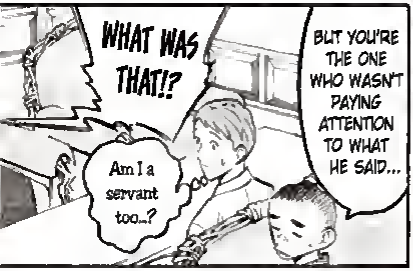

OF COURSE, ARTISTS AND STUDENTS OF POTTERY HAVE EVEN MORE SPECIFIC CLASSIFICATIONS...
BUT OLD POTTERY ISN'T VERY POPULAR IN THE ANTIQUES BUSINESS THESE DAYS, SO THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.

WHILE THE IMARI FACTORIES PRODUCE "TSUBO" THAT ARE PAINTED WITH ELABORATE DESIGNS.
These are the basics.


FOR INSTANCE, THE TOKONAME AND SHIGARAKI POTTERY FACTORIES PRODUCE "KAME" WITH A NATURAL, UNGLAZED FINISH.


OH COME ON...
I see...
LATELY, THERE ARE FEWER PEOPLE WITH AN INTEREST IN THE TEA CEREMONY...
SO PRICES HAVE DROPPED, AND IT'S QUITE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN VERY NICE PIECES FOR A REASONABLE INVESTMENT!

SO AS MY SERVANTS, YOU HAVE TO HELP ME FIGURE IT OUT!
I JUST WANT TO GET IT OVER WITH!!
GLA
RE


WHAT WAS THAT!?
Am I a servant too...?
BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT HE SAID...

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF IT'S A "KAME" OR A "TSUBO!"
WHO CARES ABOUT THE SPECIFICS?
MY WEIRDO FATHER IS TREATING ME LIKE HIS OWN PERSONAL SHOPPING SERVICE, BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT KIND OF POTTERY HE WANTS!!

BUT...
WITHOUT MORE INFORMATION, THERE'S REALLY NOT MUCH TO GO ON.
I'VE ALREADY NAMED ALL OF THE FAMOUS CERAMICS MANU-FACTURERS THAT I KNOW OF.
IS THAT ALL THERE IS?
I'M AFRAID SO.
ARE YOU SURE?
.....
HM... FAMOUS ARTISANS ARE A LOT LIKE NOVELISTS IN THAT THEIR WORK IS USUALLY VERY DISTINCTIVE.
SO IF YOU KNOW THE NAME OF THE ARTIST...
THERE'S NO WAY HE WOULD REMEMBER THE NAME OF THE SCULPTOR.
NO, MY FATHER IS AN IDIOT.
HE HAS AN IDO TEA BOWL, BUT HE CALLS IT AN "IMO."
MY MOTHER CAUGHT HIM EATING NATTO OUT OF IT AND REALLY GAVE HIM HELL!
AN IDO TEA BOWL!?

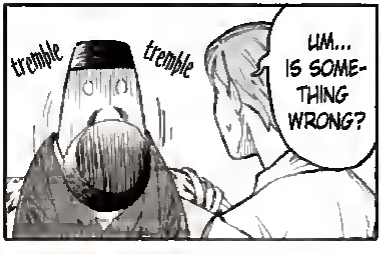
NOTE 'Imo' means "potato," but "Ido" tea bowls from Korea are some of the most prized ceramics in the world. One Ido bowl owned by a temple in Kyoto is estimated to be so valuable that if the temple were ever to burn down, the sale of that one bowl would be enough to pay for the entire reconstruction. Natto is a breakfast food made of stinky, sticky fermented soybeans, so you definitely wouldn't want to put it in an expensive bowl.

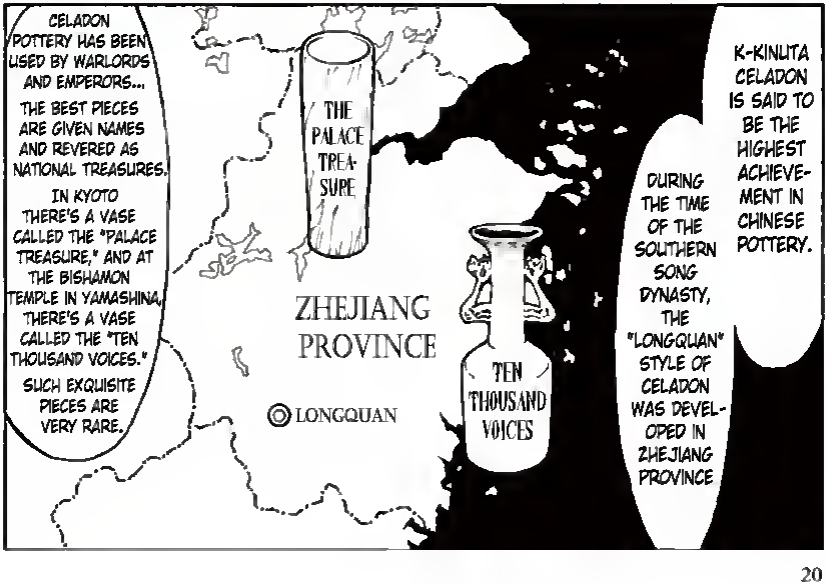
NOTE It's hard to work out historical exchange rates, but this is equivalent to about 600000 modern yen, or about $6000. The best Ido bowls are priceless.

CHINA IS FAMOUS FOR CERAMICS AS WELL .. FROM ANCIENT CAI TAO AND TANG SAN CAI POTTERY TO QINGBAI WARE AND QINGCI CELADON ..
THE BEST IDO PIECES WERE ALL IMPORTED FROM KOREA.
BUT IDO POTTERY ISN'T ACTUALLY JAPANESE
whoa!
Five figures? You mean ten thousand yen?
10,000..
AT THE VERY LEAST.
VERY. EVEN ONE OF LOW QUALITY WOULD EASILY COST FIVE FIGURES.
Is that expensive?
THAT'S IT!
YEAH, LIKE I SAID BEFORE! "KING CELERY"
IT WAS DEVELOPED OVER THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO, DURING THE TIME OF WAR BETWEEN THE YIN AND ZHOU DYNASTIES... AT ONE TIME, IT WAS PRODUCED IN MANY STYLES.
ORIGINALLY, CELADON POTTERY WAS PRODUCED IN THE ZHEJIANG AND FUJIAN REGIONS OF CHINA, BUT EVENTUALLY IT SPREAD THROUGHOUT CHINA AND EAST ASIA.
"CELADON" REFERS TO A SPECIAL GREEN GLAZE.
CELA-DON?
AH...
YEAH, "CELERY!" WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Yeah!
That's it!
That's what my stupid father said!

Y...
YOU MEAN KINUTA CELA-DON!?
SPUTTER

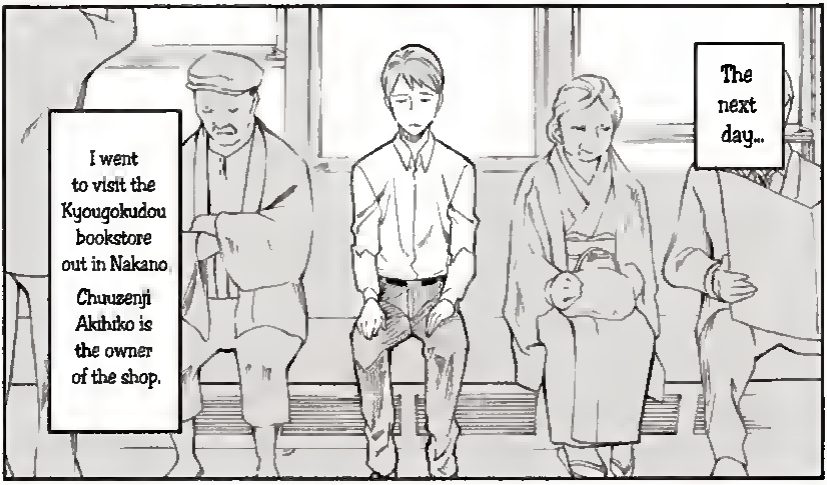

tremble
tremble
UM... IS SOME-THING WRONG?

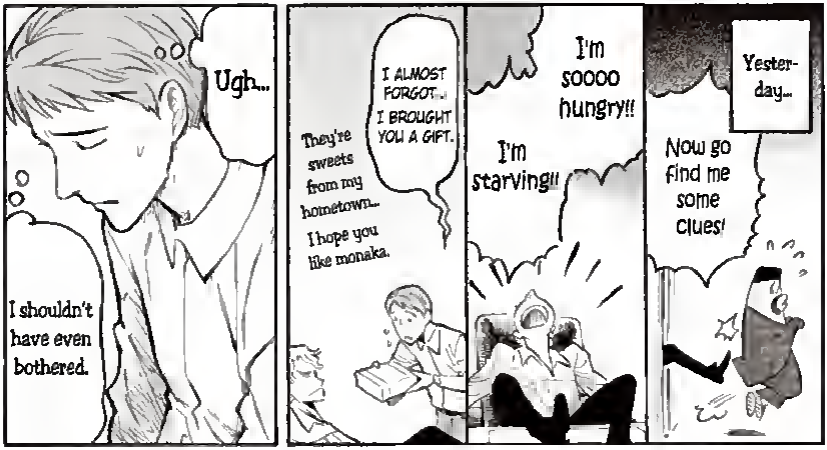

CELADON POTTERY HAS BEEN USED BY WARLORDS AND EMPERORS...
THE BEST PIECES ARE GIVEN NAMES AND REVERED AS NATIONAL TREASURES.
IN KYOTO THERE'S A VASE CALLED THE "PALACE TREASURE," AND AT THE BISHAMON TEMPLE IN YAMASHINA, THERE'S A VASE CALLED THE "TEN THOUSAND VOICES."
SUCH EXQUISITE PIECES ARE VERY RARE.
THE PALACE TREA-SURE
ZHEJIANG PROVINCE
LONGQUAN
TEN THOUSAND VOICES
DURING THE TIME OF THE SOUTHERN SONG DYNASTY, THE "LONGQUAN" STYLE OF CELADON WAS DEVEL-OPED IN ZHEJIANG PROVINCE
K-KINUTA CELADON IS SAID TO BE THE HIGHEST ACHIEVE-MENT IN CHINESE POTTERY.

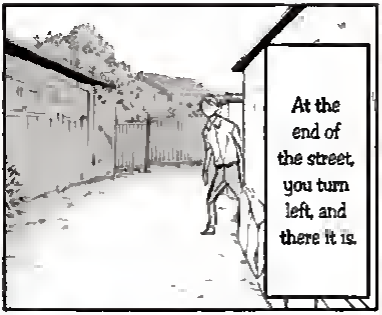
NOTE Celadon vases have sold for several million dollars at modern auctions

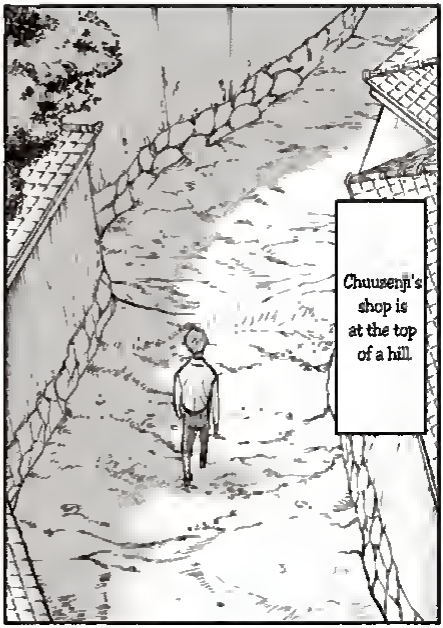
IT'S "KINU-TA."
AND YES, THEY DO.
So this King Celadon stuff... they make "kame" pottery, right?
oh my god
OH, FIFTY TO A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEN AT THE VERY LEAST, I'D SAY.
So celadon is expensive?
Sounds like a waste of money if you ask me.
But whatever,
Let's go find one!
Let's go find one!
WHAT?

Why not?
I'm good at finding things!
Even my stupid father said so, and he never says anything nice about me.
Anyway, he wants one of these fancy "kame" things so he can use it to bribe some government official from Thailand.
BUT... BUT...
WE CAN'T JUST GO LOOKING FOR SOMETHING LIKE THAT AT THE LOCAL PAWN SHOP!
What have I gotten myself into...?

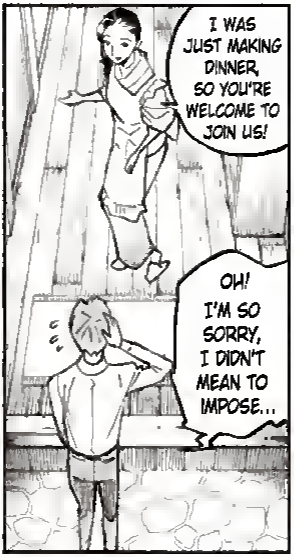

I went to visit the Kyougokudou bookstore out in Nakano.
Chuuzenji Akihiko is the owner of the shop.
The next day...


Ugh...
I shouldn't have even bothered.
I ALMOST FORGOT... I BROUGHT YOU A GIFT.
They're sweets from my hometown... I hope you like monaka.
I'm soooo hungry!!
I'm starving!!
Yester-day...
Now go find me some clues!

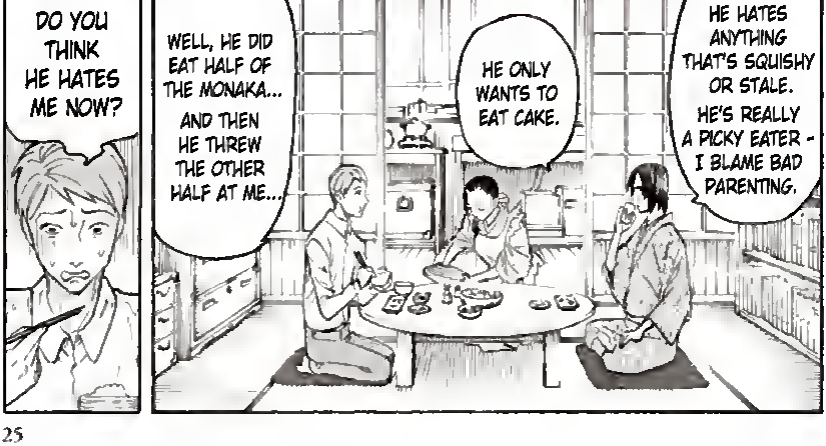




NOTE The sign says "Kyougokudou."

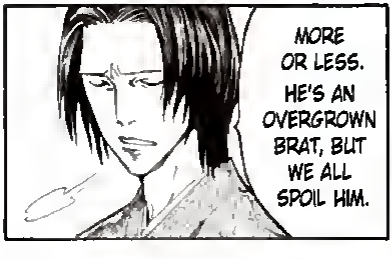


NOTE Monaka is a Japanese dessert made from sweet bean paste sandwiched between two rice cookies.


DO YOU THINK HE HATES ME NOW?
WELL, HE DID EAT HALF OF THE MONAKA...
AND THEN HE THREW THE OTHER HALF AT ME...
HE ONLY WANTS TO EAT CAKE.
HE HATES ANYTHING THAT'S SQUISHY OR STALE.
HE'S REALLY A PICKY EATER - I BLAME BAD PARENTING.

IF YOU WERE SEKIGUCHI-KUN, HE WOULD HAVE THROWN THE WHOLE BOX AT YOU WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.
IS HE ALWAYS LIKE THAT?

NO, HE PROBABLY LIKES YOU QUITE A BIT.
FRANKLY, I'M AMAZED THAT HE EVEN ATE HALF OF IT.


MORE OR LESS.
HE'S AN OVERGROWN BRAT, BUT WE ALL SPOIL HIM.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS DEPENDING ON ENOKIZU.
ANYWAY, THIS IS A TRICKY SITUATION.
RUSTLE

Maybe I'm a maso-chist...
I do it too...

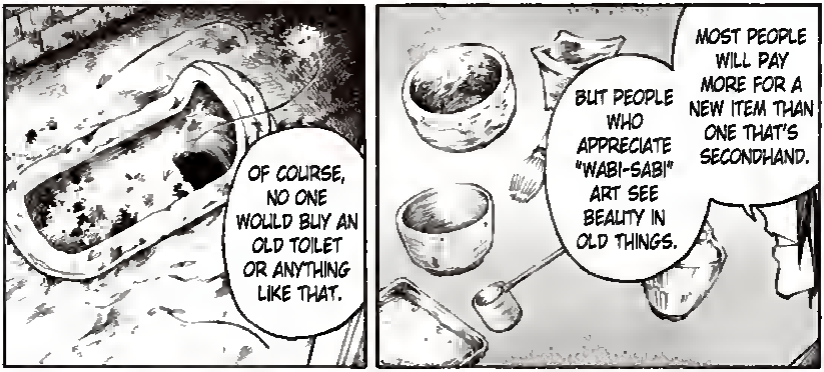
WHOA...
I SHOULD START PAYING MORE ATTENTION TO THE NEWS...
WELL, WHATEVER.
Japan-Thailand Trade Negotiations Formal Agreement Nearing Completion
Major Announcement from Ministry of Foreign Affairs Expected
BEFORE THEY SIGN THE TREATY, THE MINISTY IS NATURALLY GOING TO TRY TO SECURE A TRADE DEAL THAT FAVORS JAPAN.
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, THE TINIEST MISTAKE CAN BRING NEGOTIATIONS TO A SCREECHING HALT.
I'm not that interested in politics, though.

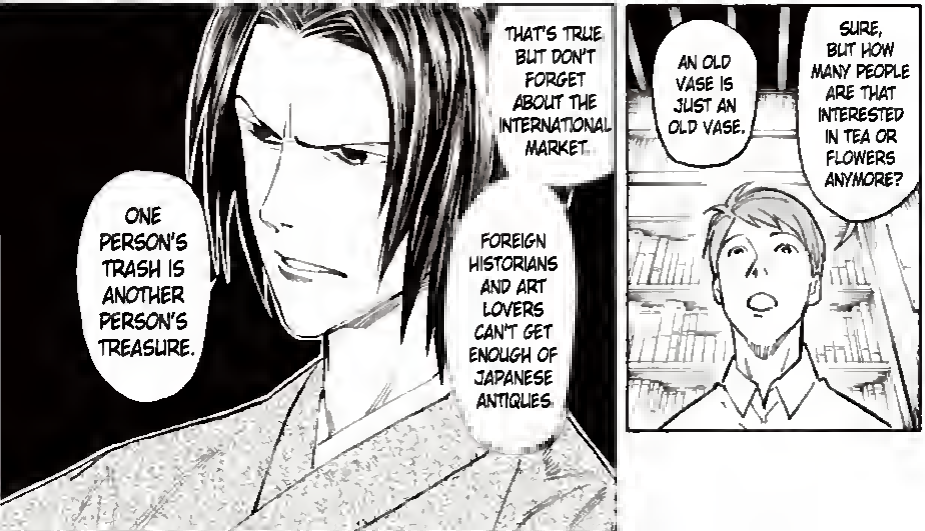
AND ENOKIZU-SAN'S FATHER IS LEADING THE NEGOTIATIONS? YOU MUST BE JOKING...
I WISH I WAS JOKING.
HE'S HONEST AND STRAIGHTFORWARD TO A FAULT.
HE SAYS EXACTLY WHAT'S ON HIS MIND, REGARDLESS OF HOW OTHER PEOPLE WILL REACT.

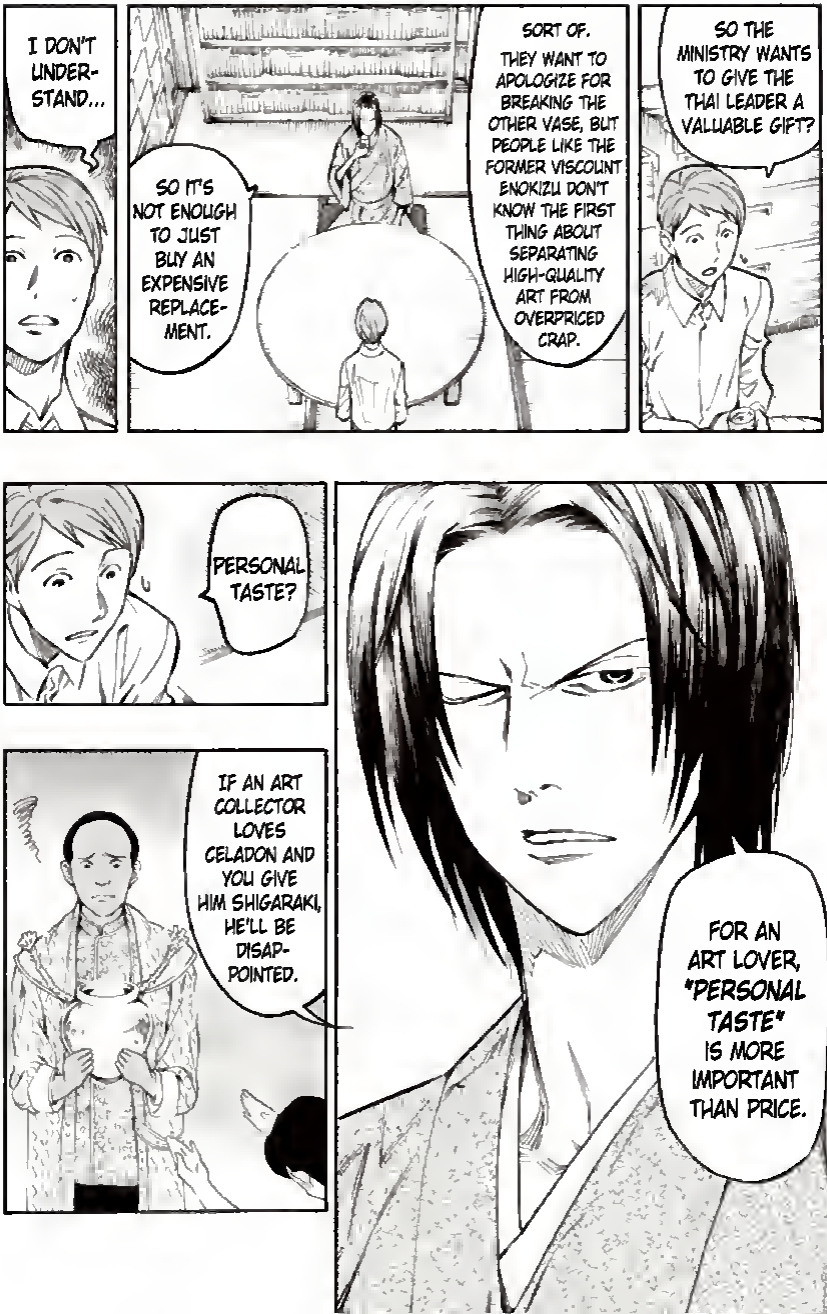
NOT LONG AGO, ONE OF THE FORMER VISCOUNT ENOKIZU'S SUBORDINATES WAS ATTENDING A PARTY HOSTED BY THE THAI ROYAL FAMILY, AND HE BROKE ONE OF THEIR PRICELESS VASES.
I SEE...
SO THE MINISTRY NEEDS TO FIND SOMETHING TO REPLACE THE VASE THAT WAS BROKEN...
DO YOU THINK A VASE LIKE THAT WILL BE EASY TO RE-PLACE?
Um...
WELL, IMAGAWA-SAN SAID THAT HE WOULD TRY TO FIND THEM A NICE PIECE OF SHIGARAKI POTTERY...
SHIGARAKI WARE AND CELADON ARE VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.
IS SHIGARAKI NOT AS GOOD?
OH NO, THEY'RE BOTH VERY EXPEN-SIVE.

NOTE "Wabi-sabi" is a style of Japanese art that finds beauty in things that are rough, imperfect, and handmade. It's believed that being able to appreciate wabi-sabi is a step towards Buddhist enlightenment. Wabi-sabi artwork gives an impression of simple, natural elegance. It may *look* simple and natural, but it's often expensive!

TEA AND FLOWERS ...?
BUT WHY?
BUT PEOPLE WHO PRACTICE FLOWER ARRANGING AND TEA CEREMONY WILL PAY A FORTUNE FOR RARE BOWLS AND VASES.
PERHAPS THAT'S TRUE FOR NORMAL POTTERY.
IMAGAWA-SAN SAID THAT POTTERY ISN'T IN HIGH DEMAND RIGHT NOW, SO PRICES ARE LOW


OF COURSE, NO ONE WOULD BUY AN OLD TOILET OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
BUT PEOPLE WHO APPRECIATE "WABI-SABI" ART SEE BEAUTY IN OLD THINGS.
MOST PEOPLE WILL PAY MORE FOR A NEW ITEM THAN ONE THAT'S SECONDHAND.


ONE PERSON'S TRASH IS ANOTHER PERSON'S TREASURE.
FOREIGN HISTORIANS AND ART LOVERS CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF JAPANESE ANTIQUES.
THAT'S TRUE BUT DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET.
AN OLD VASE IS JUST AN OLD VASE.
SURE, BUT HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE THAT INTERESTED IN TEA OR FLOWERS ANYMORE?


I DON'T UNDER-STAND...
SO IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO JUST BUY AN EXPENSIVE REPLACE-MENT.
SORT OF. THEY WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR BREAKING THE OTHER VASE, BUT PEOPLE LIKE THE FORMER VISCOUNT ENOKIZU DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT SEPARATING HIGH-QUALITY ART FROM OVERPRICED CRAP.
SO THE MINISTRY WANTS TO GIVE THE THAI LEADER A VALUABLE GIFT?
PERSONAL TASTE?
IF AN ART COLLECTOR LOVES CELADON AND YOU GIVE HIM SHIGARAKI, HE'LL BE DISAP-POINTED.
FOR AN ART LOVER, "PERSONAL TASTE" IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PRICE.

NO DOUBT MOST OF THEM ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT SOUTHEAST ASIANS ARE SIMPLE AND UNSOPHISTICATED, SO A THAI WON'T BE ABLE TO TELL GOOD ART FROM BAD.
WHAT A BUNCH OF ARROGANT ASSHOLES...
NO MATTER WHAT IT IS?
THAT'S RIGHT.
SO MOST LIKELY, THE FORMER VISCOUNT ENOKIZU TOLD THE MINISTRY STAFF TO GO OUT AND BUY WHATEVER EXPENSIVE POTTERY THEY CAN GET THEIR HANDS ON.
SIGH
SO IT'S UNLIKELY THAT THEY'LL FIND ANYTHING WORTHWHILE.
THEY'RE THE ONES WHO DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ART...
WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW IS THAT THAILAND IS ACTUALLY FAMOUS FOR ITS SAWANKHALOK STYLE OF CELADON CERAMICS.
BUT... WHAT ABOUT *KINUTA CELADON?*
OH!
THEY'RE JUST BLINDLY THROWING AWAY MONEY.
JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING IS CELADON DOESN'T MEAN IT'S VALUABLE.

KINUTA CELADON, HUH...?
REAL PIECES OF KINUTA CELADON ARE NATIONAL TREASURES WORTH AT LEAST A MILLION YEN.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU FIND LAYING AROUND IN A JUNK SHOP.
I SEE...
BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF DECENT-QUALITY IMITATIONS.
Tsukkomi!
IMITA-TIONS!?
YOU MEAN, POTTERY THAT LOOKS LIKE REAL CELADON,
BUT THAT'S ACTUALLY A FAKE?
NO, IT'S NOT FAKE.
IMITATION CELADON IS STILL CELADON.
?
?
fu fu fu
OUR INCENSE BURNER IS CELADON!

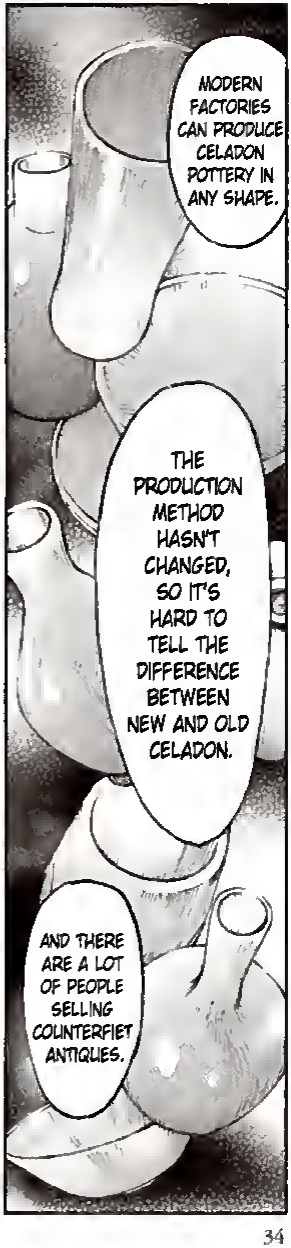
AND I GOT IT FOR JUST 50 YEN!
I BOUGHT IT IN KIYOMIZU-SAKA!
IT'S NOT KINUTA CELADON, BUT THE COLOR IS STILL PRETTY!
SO... IT'S A FAKE?
NOPE, IT'S REAL CELADON!
?
PLENTY OF PEOPLE COLLECT POTTERY WITHOUT KNOWING ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
MAYBE THEY BUY IT ON A TRIP, MAYBE THEY MAKE IT THEMSELVES, MAYBE THEY JUST THINK IT LOOKS NICE.
THAT'S HOW YOU START BUILDING A COLL-ECTION!
THERE ARE MODERN FACTORIES ALL OVER THE PLACE THAT PRODUCE CELADON POTTERY.
BUT THEY ARTIFICIALLY AGE IT SO IT LOOKS LIKE A VALUABLE ANTIQUE.
THAT'S WHY IT'S "IMITATION" CELADON.
OH!

NOTE Kinuta celadon is the highest, most delicate grade of pale green celadon. Tenryuuji celadon, named after a vase that was presented to Tenryuuji Temple in Kyoto, has a bright color and is considered slightly higher quality than Shichikan celadon. Shichikan celadon has a thicker glaze and less subtle coloring.

SO,
THE TERM "KINUTA CELADON" REFERS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO CELADON PRODUCED IN CHINA'S ZHEJIANG PROVINCE DURING THE SOUTHERN SONG DYNASTY.
CELADON PRODUCED DURING THE YUAN DYNASTY IS CALLED "TENRYUUJI CELADON," AND CELADON PRODUCED DURING THE MING DYNASTY IS CALLED "SHICHIKAN CELADON."
WELL, I'M NOT SURE IF THOSE ARE THE OFFICIAL DESIGNATIONS, BUT THAT'S WHAT I'VE HEARD.
The pottery was baked in kilns called "longquan."

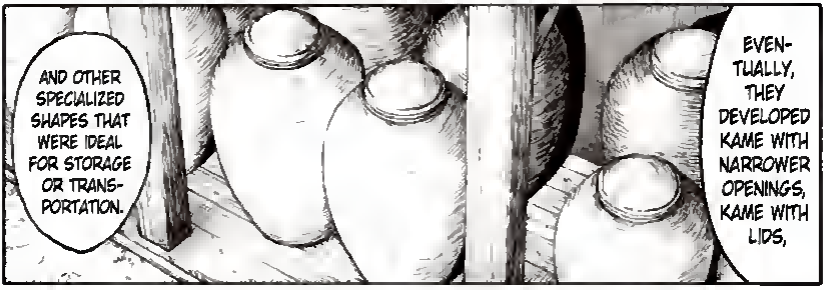
NOTE Southern Song Dynasty: 1127-1279
Yuan Dynasty: 1271-1368 Ming Dynasty: 1368-1644

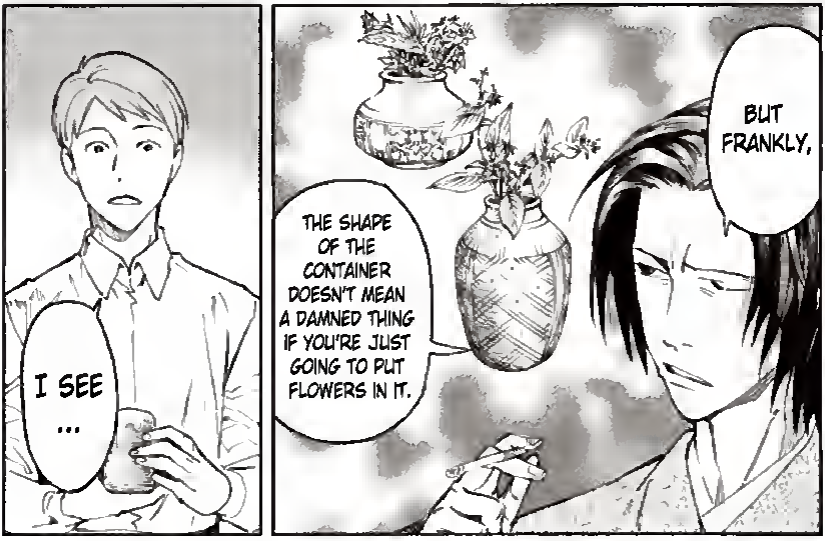
EVEN OUR IDEA OF WHAT MAKES A PIECE "HIGH QUALITY" CAN CHANGE OVER TIME.
UNTIL RECENTLY, THOUGH, SUCH DESIGNATIONS WEREN'T USED.
TIMES CHANGE, ARTISTIC STYLES CHANGE, AND THERE'S USUALLY NO POINT IN TRYING TO CLASSIFY ART AS "GOOD" OR "BAD."

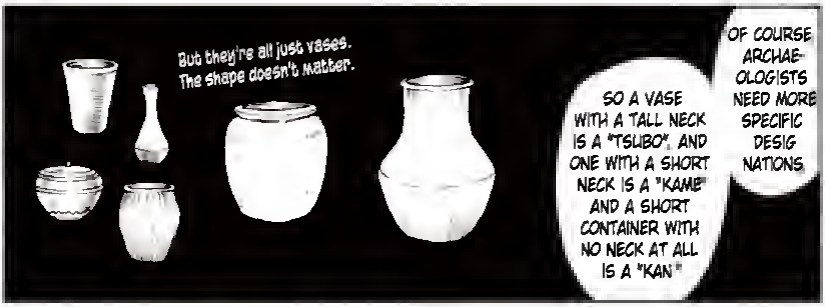

MODERN FACTORIES CAN PRODUCE CELADON POTTERY IN ANY SHAPE.
THE PRODUCTION METHOD HASN'T CHANGED, SO IT'S HARD TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NEW AND OLD CELADON.
AND THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE SELLING COUNTERFIET ANTIQUES.

HM... ISN'T THERE ANYTHING THAT DIFFERENTIATES ANCIENT CHINESE CELADON FROM THE CHEAP MODERN STUFF?
NOT THAT I THINK THERE ARE MANY ANCIENT CHINESE "KAME" POTS JUST LAYING AROUND...
SIGH
SO HOW DO YOU SEPARATE "KINUTA CELADON" FROM A 50-YEN SOUVENIER?
IT'S A COMPLETELY POINTLESS DISTINCTION.
WAIT, WHAT?
NO THEY'RE NOT.
KAME...
HM...
OH, RIGHT! I LEARNED THAT "KAME" ARE DIFFERENT FROM "TSUBO."

"KAME" WERE ORIGINALLY JUST CLAY POTS USED TO HOLD LIQUID.
A LONG TIME AGO, THERE WERE ALL DIFFERENT TYPES OF "KAME" FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES.
BUT MOST OF THEM WERE MADE TO STORE LIQUOR.

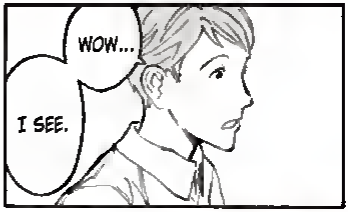

EVEN-TUALLY, THEY DEVELOPED KAME WITH NARROWER OPENINGS, KAME WITH LIDS,
AND OTHER SPECIALIZED SHAPES THAT WERE IDEAL FOR STORAGE OR TRANS-PORTATION.

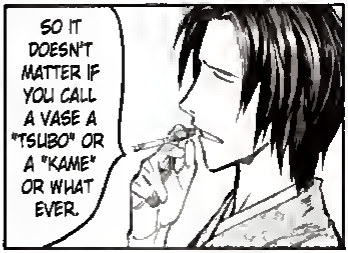

BUT FRANKLY,
THE SHAPE OF THE CONTAINER DOESN'T MEAN A DAMNED THING IF YOU'RE JUST GOING TO PUT FLOWERS IN IT.
I SEE ...

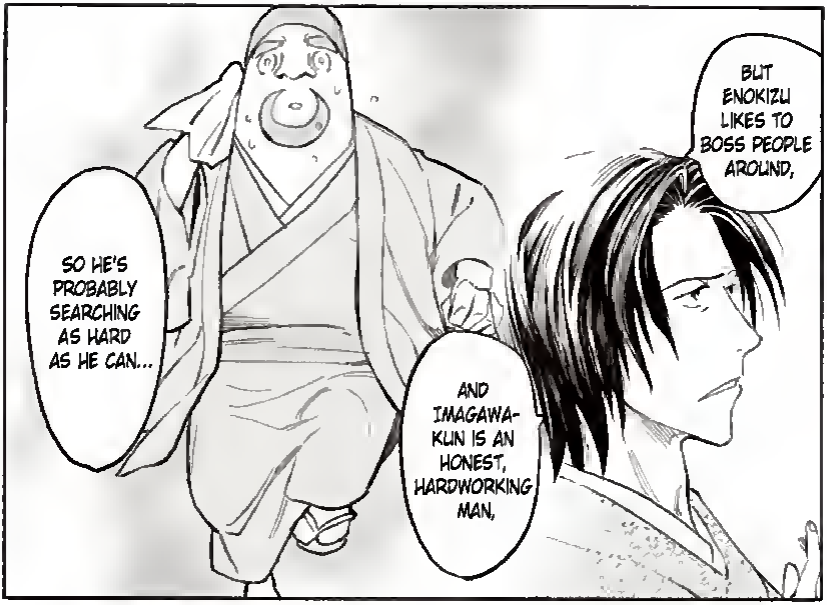

But they're all just vases. The shape doesn't matter.
SO A VASE WITH A TALL NECK IS A "TSUBO", AND ONE WITH A SHORT NECK IS A "KAME" AND A SHORT CONTAINER WITH NO NECK AT ALL IS A "KAN."
OF COURSE ARCHAE-OLOGISTS NEED MORE SPECIFIC DESIG NATIONS

A VASE IS JUST A VASE.
AS FAR AS I'M AWARE, THE THAI LANGUAGE MAKES NO DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN THE SHAPES OF VASES.
OBVIOUSLY THE DISTINCTIONS GET MURKY AT TIMES, BUT JAPANESE COLLECTORS INSIST ON USING THEM ANYWAY.

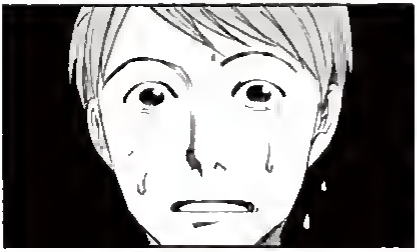
SO THERE'S NO WAY THAT ANY ANTIQUES SHOP IN JAPAN WOULD HAVE A GENUINE PIECE OF "KINUTA CELADON?"
THAT'S RIGHT.

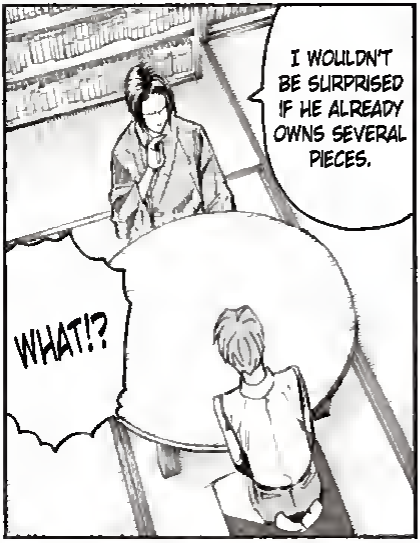

WOW...
I SEE.


SO IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU CALL A VASE A "TSUBO" OR A "KAME" OR WHAT EVER.

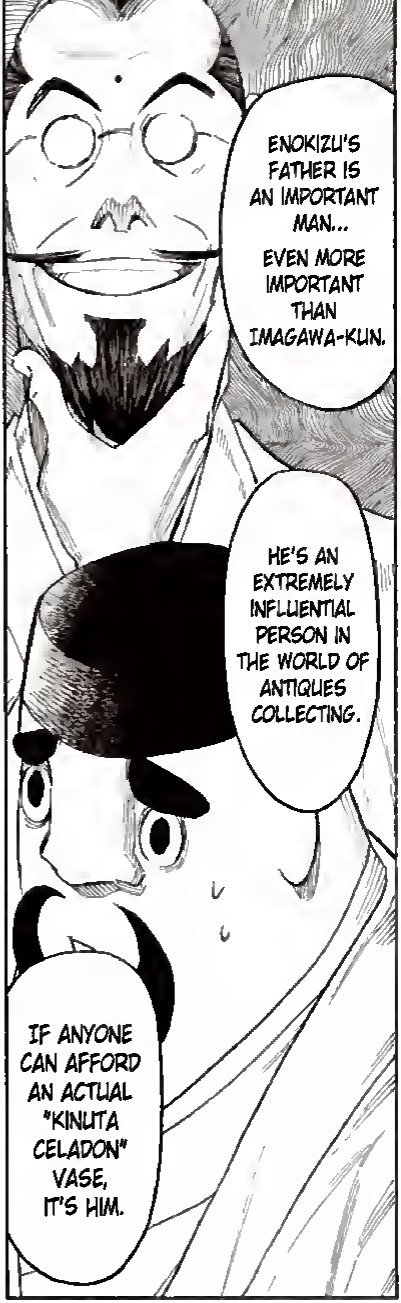

BUT ENOKIZU LIKES TO BOSS PEOPLE AROUND,
AND IMAGAWA-KUN IS AN HONEST, HARDWORKING MAN,
SO HE'S PROBABLY SEARCHING AS HARD AS HE CAN...

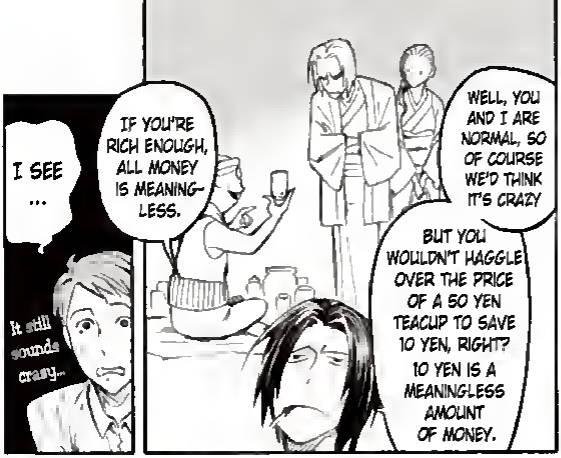
EVEN THOUGH HE WON'T FIND ANY-THING...
BUT THERE'S ANOTHER PROBLEM ...
WELL, TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, THE PROBLEM IS THAT FORMER VISCOUNT ENOKIZU MIKIMARO IS INVOLVED.
?

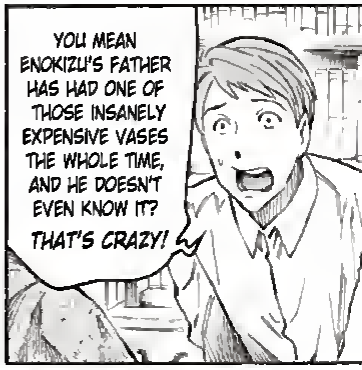



I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF HE ALREADY OWNS SEVERAL PIECES.
WHAT!?

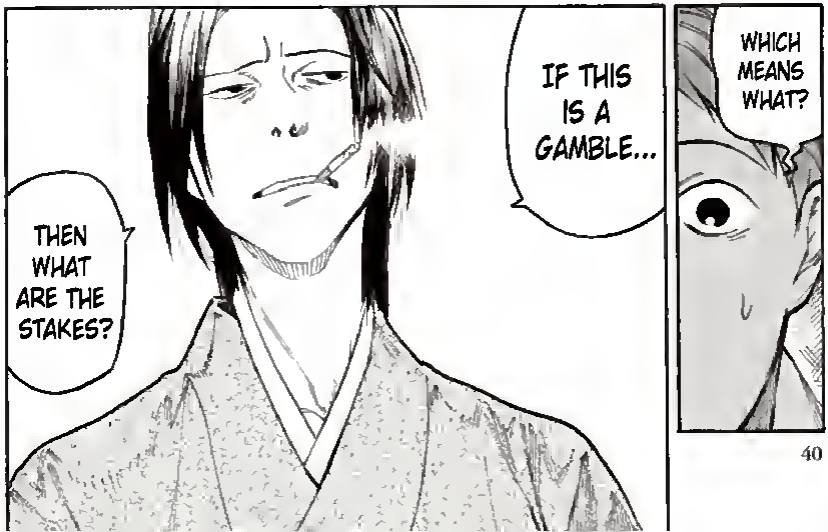
WHAT!?
BUT HE CARES MORE ABOUT PETS THAN POSSESSIONS, SO HE WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT HE HAS.
HOW COULD HE NOT KNOW SOMETHING LIKE THAT!?


ENOKIZU'S FATHER IS AN IMPORTANT MAN...
EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN IMAGAWA-KUN.
HE'S AN EXTREMELY INFLUENTIAL PERSON IN THE WORLD OF ANTIQUES COLLECTING.
IF ANYONE CAN AFFORD AN ACTUAL "KINUTA CELADON" VASE, IT'S HIM.


I SEE ...
It still sounds crazy...
IF YOU'RE RICH ENOUGH, ALL MONEY IS MEANINGLESS.
WELL, YOU AND I ARE NORMAL, SO OF COURSE WE'D THINK IT'S CRAZY
BUT YOU WOULDN'T HAGGLE OVER THE PRICE OF A 50 YEN TEACUP TO SAVE 10 YEN, RIGHT?
10 YEN IS A MEANINGLESS AMOUNT OF MONEY.


YOU MEAN ENOKIZU'S FATHER HAS HAD ONE OF THOSE INSANELY EXPENSIVE VASES THE WHOLE TIME, AND HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IT?
THAT'S CRAZY!

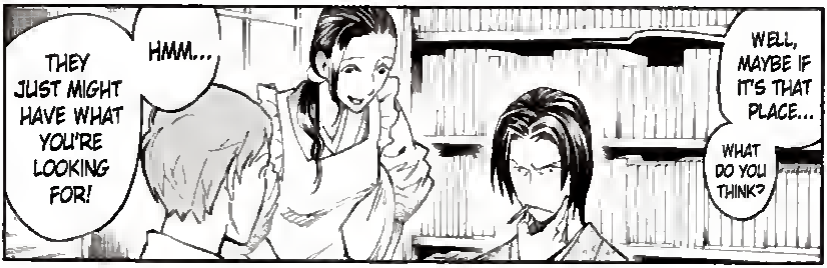
WHICH MEANS...
SO HE'S PROBABLY GAMBLING ON HIS SON'S UNCANNY ABILITY TO FIND THINGS THAT NO ONE ELSE CAN.
THAT DILETTANTE VISCOUNT DOESN'T REALLY NEED TO HIRE HIS PRODIGAL SON FOR THIS JOB.
BUT HE DOESN'T DO ANYTHING UNLESS IT BENEFITS HIMSELF...


THEN WHAT ARE THE STAKES?
IF THIS IS A GAMBLE...
WHICH MEANS WHAT?

FUSS
FUSS
HE'S A HOBBYIST.
BEFORE HE DECIDED TO DABBLE IN POLITICS, HE WAS AN AMATEUR SCIENTIST.
HE'S RESEARCHING THE HIBERNATION HABITS OF JAPANESE CRICKETS, OR SOMETHING EQUALLY USELESS.
IS HE REALLY THAT UNRELIABLE?
This is an issue of national importance!
I SEE ...
SO HE MOST LIKELY GOT INVOLVED IN ALL OF THIS BECAUSE IT SOUNDED LIKE FUN TO HIM.
AH... I SEE...
OR IS IT ALREADY TOO LATE?
HMPH
ANYWAY, YOU PROBABLY SHOULDN'T SPEND TOO MUCH TIME AROUND A MAN LIKE ENOKIZU.
YOU NEVER KNOW, INSANITY MIGHT BE CONTAGIOUS.

I AM NICE! I'M TOO NICE!
I LET HIM DRAG ME INTO HIS BULLSHIT TOO!
DEAR, YOU'RE NOT BEING VERY NICE.
IF YOU ASSOCIATE WITH IDIOTS, YOU'LL LOOK LIKE AN IDIOT TOO.
DO YOU WANT TO END UP LIKE IMAGAWA-KUN?
THAT'S RIGHT!
oh ho ho
IF HE WANTS KINLITA CELADON, HE SHOULD START BY LOOKING IN THE COLLECTION OF JAPAN'S #1 USELESS ECCENTRIC!
IF MACHIKO WANTS MY HELP, HE CAN ASK FOR IT!
TCH
YOU CAN'T JUST LEAVE POOR IMAGAWA-SAN TO STRUGGLE ON HIS OWN, CAN YOU?
WHAT ABOUT THE "POTTERY HOUSE" OUT IN AKASAKA?
WAIT...

EH?
COME TO THINK OF IT, DIDN'T THEY REQUEST AN EXORCISM FROM ME?
!?


THEY JUST MIGHT HAVE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!
HMM...
WELL, MAYBE IF IT'S THAT PLACE...
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

OR, MORE ACCURATELY, HE WAS A HOARDER.
A COLLECTOR OF POTTERY AND VASES.
THE OWNER WAS A COLLEC-TOR...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
Um...

IF YOU GO THERE...
YOU MIGHT EVEN FIND KINUTA CELADON.